



# NEWS

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This is an unofficial announcement of Commission action. Release of the full text of a Commission order constitutes official action. See MCI v. FCC, 515 F.2d 385 (D.C. Cir. 1974).

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## **U.S. AND CANADA REACH AGREEMENT ON IMPLEMENTING DIGITAL TELEVISION SERVICE ALONG THE U.S./CANADA BORDER**

**Washington, DC --** William E. Kennard, chairman of the Federal Communications Commission (FCC), and Michael Binder, Industry Canada Assistant Deputy Minister, have signed a Letter of Understanding (LOU) regarding the introduction of digital television (DTV) service along the United States/Canada border. The signing of this LOU represents the culmination of four years of discussions between the FCC and Industry Canada that focused on establishing an allocation plan to make way for the transition to digital television service.

The LOU covers DTV operations within 400 kilometers on either side of the U.S.-Canadian border. The LOU contains a table of mutually acceptable DTV channel allotments for each country and the procedures each country will use in notifying and evaluating proposed DTV facilities. The DTV allotments were developed through rulemaking proceedings and are located in bands currently assigned to the television service. An LOU between the U.S. and Canada was necessary because the prior agreement, which will remain in effect, only covers analog television service.

Some television stations have been provided DTV allotments in spectrum that the U.S. plans to recover for non-broadcast use, including commercial mobile and public safety operations, following the transition to DTV (i.e., channels 52-69). Canada is also considering a similar change in spectrum use. Accordingly, the LOU provides that both Administrations will continue to review the allotment tables and to try to accommodate such stations. The FCC and Industry Canada are also working towards a future agreement that will specifically address non-broadcast services in these bands. Until such a separate agreement is reached, the LOU provides that non-broadcast services in these bands must protect DTV and analog TV stations.

Chairman Kennard remarked that "the signing of the LOU is another step towards implementation of digital television. The LOU also paves the way for the introduction of public safety and other non-broadcast operations on channels 60-69 as the deployment of DTV services progresses. I look forward to continuing discussions with our friends in Canada to ensure the rapid deployment of these innovative and important services."

The full text of the LOU has been placed on file at the International Bureau Reference Room CY-A257, located on the Courtyard level of 445 12<sup>th</sup> St. S.W., Washington, D.C. Copies

are also available from the International Transcription Service at (202) 857-3800 and can be downloaded from the FCC's International Bureau internet site at <http://www.fcc.gov/ib/pnd/agree>.

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